

Your Year 8 Journey



St. Benedict's Pathway

College Mission Statement

St. Benedict's College is a Catholic, all ability inclusive school committed to delivering excellence for all. Together with home and community, we strive to enable our students to be happy, safe and successful.

"St Benedict's was my first choice. I always wanted to come to this school because my two older brothers came here and they told me that it was brilliant. When I arrived in September I was excited but nervous. On my first day Ms Woods put me in my form class. It was difficult because none of my friends from St Comgall's were in the same form class as me but I quickly met Emiliya and Sharnice who are now my best friends.



My first days in school were strange because while I was able to attend the Induction Day I then tested positive for Covid and I missed my first school day. I was really disappointed. When I was able to start school Ms Woods, Mr Shaw and my classmates were all very welcoming and they went out of their way to look after me.

I really like learning in school because I like all the different subjects that we do and I love moving from class to class. My favourite subjects are Art and Home Economics. I love the practical work we do in them. All my teachers are very kind and if I ask questions they are always willing to help me.

Before our Halloween holidays all the Year 8s went to Woodhall for a Fun Day. It was a great day and I got to know other people in my year group as they were with me in my activity group. I loved the canoeing and zip lining. I hadn't done either of them before. I have taken up Camogie and Gaelic and attend the after school training for both. Miss Mc Gurk and Miss Mc Stravick, who are also my class teachers are really nice and they are helping me learn the basics as I haven't played either of these sports before. I hope one day to be good enough to play for the school team.

It was a real honour to represent my year group when I read at the Year 8 Mass of Welcome and the Advent Service.

I love my school, my learning, my teachers and my friends, and I think you would love St Benedict's too if you came here."

Eva Mulvenna 8G, St Comgall's Primary School

Our Aims

- To deliver excellence for all
- To ensure all our students are happy, safe and successful
- To ensure all our students are challenged and supported to be the best that they can be
- To empower all our students to achieve their personal potential
- To ensure all our students' achievements are celebrated
- To ensure all our students are included, valued and respected and that religious and cultural differences are celebrated within the school community
- To develop our students' understanding of their Catholic faith and to promote Christian values and attitudes within the school community
- To awaken in our students a sense of their own dignity and self worth and to promote their self confidence
- To promote student health and well being and develop student resilience
- To provide enrichment and extra curricular opportunities to enrich student experience
- To support our students to become independent and life-long learners
- To prepare our students to meet the challenges of a changing world in the 21st century
- To work in partnership with parents, parish and community
- To develop a culture of accountability, responsibility, self evaluation and self improvement.



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Becoming a Happy, Safe and Successful Learner in St. Benedict's College

We recognise that the move from Primary to Post Primary school is a "big move" and one that can be difficult and stressful for both students and parents. As a College we strive to ensure that all of our students are happy, safe and successful from their arrival in Year 8 to their departure in Year 12. We have a dedicated and experienced Year 8 Team who advise, guide and support our youngest students to ensure that their transition to us is a positive, happy and stress free experience.

Steps in the Transition Process

In June:

Primary School Visits

- Our Head of Year 8 and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) visit our feeder primary schools. They meet P7 teachers who provide us with a profile of all our transferring students.

Enrolment Meetings

- All Year 8 students and their parents are invited to an individual Enrolment Meeting with a member of our Year 8 Pastoral Team. This meeting is an opportunity for additional pastoral and academic information to be shared.
- Students with additional needs are invited to meet the SENCo.
- A Welcome Pack, containing key information about the school, is provided to students and parents.

Welcome Day

- All Year 8 students are invited in to school for a Welcome Day. This allows them to revisit the school, meet the Year 8 team and begin the process of making new friends. While it affords us the opportunity to complete CAT4 Testing to ensure accurate and appropriate class placements. Progress Tests in English and Maths are also used in this process.

In August:

Fun Day

- All Year 8s are invited to participate in a range of interactive and fun activities designed to allow them to get to know other Year 8 students and the school building and grounds.

Induction Day

- The Year 8 Induction Day sees only Year 8s on site. It is designed to enable them to meet and get to know their Form Tutors and Form Class as well as the layout of the school and daily routines.

Induction Programme

- An Induction Programme is delivered to all Year 8 students by their Form Tutors throughout August/September.

In September:

- Year 12 Mentors are assigned to each Year 8 Form Class to provide important peer support. Bus prefects also provide reassurance.
- Year 9 class guides are in place for the first fortnight of the school year.
- Year 8s have an early lunch and are allowed on the bus first for the month of September.
- Year 8s enjoy break and lunch in their own designated recreational area.
- The Morning Club, supervised by support staff, is available in the Library from 8.30am daily.
- The Homework Club, supervised by teaching and support staff, is available Monday to Thursday until 4.30pm.

In October:

Year 8 Mass of Welcome

Parents and families of Year 8 students are invited to a Mass of Welcome. This is an excellent opportunity for parents to meet the Year 8 Team again and for us to showcase the Year 8s work and achievements in the first half term.

School Life

First year is a busy and exciting time for Year 8 students. Activities they all will be involved in include:

- Transition Trip to Woodhall
- Year 8 Mass of Welcome
- Tree of Knowledge, Mental Health Workshop
- Young Enterprise Workshop
- Shared Education
- Christmas Pantomime
- Year 8 Retreat
- Reward Trips - Bowling, Cinema



Extra-Curricular and Enrichment opportunities

We have a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities on offer before school, during lunchtime and after school. These include: Eco Club, Coding Club, Homework Club, Traditional Music Group, School Choir, Band Club, STEM Club, T&D Craft Club, Minecraft Club, Lego Club, Art Club - Credit Union Art Competition, Pottery Class (pupil and parent), Feis na nGleann Competition, Gaeltacht, Project AM Club, Cookery Club, Library Club, Games Club.

We also offer a wide range of Sports including:

Camogie, Girls Gaelic Football, Netball, Rounders, Cross Country, Athletics, Hurling, Boys Gaelic Football, Basketball, Soccer, Dance, Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Swimming, Badminton, Indoor Games, Volleyball, Rugby, Boxing, Super Heroes Fitness Club.

We produce and share a timetable of extra-curricular activities at the beginning of each term as the offer is always changing. Our hope is that there is something for everyone and we actively encourage all Year 8 students to sign up and to get involved.



Learning

Year 8 students experience the full curriculum offer and benefit from additional timetabled literacy and numeracy classes. Students are assessed regularly during the school year and receive a Progress Update at Christmas and a full written report in June following end of year examinations. All parents are invited to the College for a Parent Teacher Meeting in Term 2 and individual progress meetings can be arranged on request.

Pastoral Care

We believe that a student needs to feel happy and safe in school if they are to succeed there. Fundamental to our pastoral approach is the promotion of a caring ethos and family atmosphere and the development of positive and respectful relationships throughout the school community.

Year 8s are looked after by a team of Form Tutors who are led by the Head of Year 8. This Team are highly experienced as they remain constant. The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator advises and supports the Year 8 Team and deals with any Safeguarding and Child Protection issues that may arise in her role as Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator works in partnership with the Learning Support Team, teachers, and parents to ensure that students with additional educational needs are enabled to make a positive and successful start in their new school.

The School Counsellor is available to Year 8 students who are having difficulty and require support.

Form Tutors deliver our Personal Development Programme in a weekly timetabled class. A variety of speakers and external agencies support us in the delivery of the programme by addressing assemblies and facilitating student workshops.

We have a zero tolerance policy towards bullying.